CANADIAN Film Weekly
VOICE of the CANADIAN MOTION PICTURE INDUSTRY

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Grosses Rose 12 Per Cent in '41

Amusement Tax Yielded Ottawa $8,400,000, New Figures Reveal

Boxoffice receipts in Canadian motion picture theatres in 1941 reached the sum of $42,182,000 as against the 1940 figure, $37,858,955. The total for 1939 was $34,010,115. The 1942 grand gross is expected to be even larger. The 20 per cent amusement tax yielded the government $8,400,000 in 1941.

These figures, issued unofficially as advance information by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, Ottawa, represent an increase of 12½ per cent in 1941 over 1940. The 1940 total shows a 10 per cent increase over 1939.

The Bureau of Statistics usually issues such figures in June.

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Sugarman and Maynard to PRC

Two new branch managers have been appointed by PRC, Paul E. Maynard at Toronto and E. R. Sugarman at Winnipeg, it was announced by Harry J. Allen, head of the company in Canada. Maynard is widely-known to the trade, having served much of his life in it. Sugarman, very well connected in his own territory, is new but Allen

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New PRC Branch Managers

E. R. Sugarman Winnipeg

Paul E. Maynard Toronto

OWI Chief Pans Dual Bills

A resolution calling for the elimination of double features for the duration was passed in New York by the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures at its annual conference. It was passed after Lowell Mellett, chief of the bureau of motion pictures of the United States' Office of War Information, as chief speaker, said

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Al Perley Sick

Manager of the Midtown, Toronto, Al Perley, is ill at St. Michael's hospital with complications from a cold. Get well, Al.

Air Raid Rib

A sign at Republic Studio reads: "In case of an air raid take refuge at MGM. They haven't had a hit this season."

Moss In and Out

Alex. Moss, Paramount advertising chief, stopped off in Toronto for a day or so last week. Checked with Gordon Lightstone and Win Barron, then checked out.

Brent to London

W. Brent has joined Manager Len Herbert of the Centre, London, as his assistant.

Here's a Good Idea for Canada

The USA section of the Motion Picture Pioneers, executive Jack Cohn reveals, will present scrolls to men and women of the amusement world who have done most during the previous year to help the cause.

Could be very well imitated here.

'In Which We Serve'

The great English picture, "In Which We Serve," a tribute to the British Navy, will play its great American date at the Capitol, New York, at Christmas against powerful competition.

Dave Brandston Joins Columbia

Dave Brandston has joined Columbia's sales staff. He's formerly of B & F Theatres, managing the Grover, Garden and other Toronto houses.

Warner Bros. Plan Newsreel

A new film record of the times will soon be made available to theatres. Warner Bros., after examining the newsreel situation, have decided that there is room for another and improved one. There are five companies releasng newsreels at the present time.

The plan has already caused a dispute. The Pacific Conference of Independent Theatre Owners

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Raymond Massey Join Canadian Army

Raymond Massey, famed Canadian screen star who is a member of one of Toronto's most distinguished families, has reported at Ottawa for duty with the Canadian army. He will be attached to the Adjutant-General's branch at Ottawa, with the rank of major.

Added Protection for Army Zone Houses

The question of army camp competition with adjacent regular theatres occupied considerable time at the recent meeting of the motion picture branch of the Toronto Board of Trade. Exhibitors with theatres in army areas have suffered a falling off in business because the lads in khaki have seen the pictures on their home grounds, and have asked that some equitable arrangement be worked out.

A committee comprised of Louis Rosenfeld, O. R. Hanson, J. J. Fitzgibbons, Col. Cooper and C. M. Robson was appointed to draft rules that will be satisfactory to both sides. It is expected that a protection period of four months will be fixed between army and theatre dates. Those

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Thomas into RCAF

Bob Thomas, assistant manager of the Granada, St. Thomas, has stepped out in favor of the RCAF. He was with Bill Payne.

Ernie Reid to NFB

Ernie Reid, assistant manager of the Elgin, Ottawa, under Stewart Gillespie, has switched to the National Film Board. Larry Ryan, assistant to Bob Berezin at the Marks, Oshawa, has left to replace him.

COMBINATION BILL A WINNER

Esquire's double-bill of Pathe's "Chamber of Horrors" and "Death Cell" is a proven success in Winnipeg, Hamilton, Vancouver—and just concluded a smash week at the Orpheum Theatre, Montreal. Book this winning twosome now. (Advt.)

Film Weekly
Vol. 8, No. 48 November 25, 1942
HYE BOSSIN, Managing Editor

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'In Which We Serve'

We have just seen the worthiest picture of the war, a United Artists' release called "In Which We Serve." Representing the many-sided talent of Noel Coward, it is one of the finest examples of motion picture art and craftsmanship ever made.

It's unspangled majesty expresses with utter honesty the quiet greatness of the citizen in uniform. A tribute to the British Navy, it is an interpretation and presentation of why sailors return again and again to face death.

The fighters here live their heroism in true relation to the things that bring it forth as naturally as the day. In that alone it makes most of our war films seem spurious and the rest minor. It is told in terms of humanity rather than machinery and rage.

It will scar your imagination for a long time afterwards. You can no more leave it behind in the theatre than you can your life. The power of its appeal is unmatched in the history of the screen.

The return of a batch of Dunkirk's bedraggled heroes, saved by the seamen, makes a sailor's knot of your heart-strings. Assembling on the dock completely exhausted, they slowly regain their military bearing and march away with heads high. As they file off the screen you want to stand up and roar after them the things that are in your heart.

When these hard sailors, returning to battle after being saved from the ship they loved and lost, speak their soft goodbyes to the captain, it is the finest expression of comradeship ever recorded. You sense that the picture is coming to an end. The fear of being left behind by these men whose fortunes you have shared grows so strong that you want to run after them, to go with them and share their next glorious adventure.

"In Which We Serve" is the story of many, yet it unfolds clearly and effortlessly. Each sailor clinging to the raft in the face of machine gun fire from the air, returns through memory to the people and places he loves. The only thing theatrical about it is the medium. So great a use has been made of the possibilities of the screen that you remain unaware of the episodic nature of the story.

The war will bring many films but this one will rank easily among the best. If not the best.

* * *

A Good Response

The news that almost 300 theatres have become affiliated with the motion Picture Theatre Owners Association of Ontario through their owners is heartening to all who want to see one representative exhibitors' body in Canada's leading province. Interest is growing every day and enquiries are pouring in. Many exhibitors have had no inclination to join classified organizations with a fixed stand because such a stationery position makes no allowance for the logic of events.

The ever-amiable Syd Taube, secretary of the new organization, is hitting the road to talk to the exhibitors personally. Syd enjoys their confidence and it isn't like him to expound something in which he has no faith. The ranks of this all-embracing exhibitors' organization will have grown by the time he returns.

Sugarman and Maynard to PRC

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believes that his background will enable him to grasp film matters quickly.

Maynard, who returns to film business after three years in other fields, is the son of the late William H. Maynard, well remembered as an exhibitor in Toronto and Ottawa. Maynard, senior, who died in 1935, was one of the first theatre owners in Canada. He owned the Fairyland, Ottawa, in partnership with Ben Stapleton, father of the present owner of the Centre, Ottawa, Don Stapleton. Maynard, junior, assisted his father in the operation of the La Rita, Hillcrest, Christie and other Toronto houses.

Prior to leaving the business in 1939 he was with B & F, for which circuit he managed the Beaver, Parliament and Prince of Wales Theatres in Toronto. He's a graduate of La Salle Academy, Ottawa, and Notre Dame University, Indiana, USA. He played football at the latter school under the late Knute Rockne.

Maynard, a Pilot Officer, was recently discharged from the RCAF because of injuries.

Ephraim R. Sugarman, the Winnipeg branch manager, is an outstanding citizen of the West where, as a barrister, he enjoyed a fine reputation in legal circles. Though born and graduated in Ontario, he spent many years in Edmonton and Vancouver. Harry Allen feels that he is a fine acquisition to the Canadian industry as well as PRC.

Paul Maynard expressed himself as having great faith in the present PRC product and the future of the company.

Protection for Army Zones

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camps in isolated areas will not be affected. The intention is likely to have the four-month period apply to 35 mm. films and six months for the 16 mm. prints.

Originally army camps got prints one year after general release. This was reduced to six months when the boys asked for newer pictures, an arrangement that hasn't met with complete satisfaction either. In the USA theatres and army camps play day and date but this has been found impossible here because holdovers in regular theatres would leave them behind the camps.

There are some 350 camps in Canada and 40 of them run 35 mm. films.

1941 Figures Show Biz Gain

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The 1941 figures have not yet been officially revealed and the present information was issued to serve until more detailed reports are arrived at.

Grosses rose steadily in spite of the amusement tax and frozen admission prices. Considering that the film industry required little increase in capital expenditure, the gain means much more when compared with the same amount in other industries.

The motion picture industry has kept pace with the increase in buying power throughout the Dominion, though it falls behind some industries. According to the Monetary Times, the first six months of 1941 showed an increase of 17 per cent in retail buying over the previous year—some $250 to $275 millions more.

The magazine estimated that the pre-war $5,000 per year man now needs $9,000 to buy the same amount. The average weekly envelope this summer was $28.31 compared with $25.35 in June, 1941. Average total earnings of families is now $2,900 as compared with $1,433. The new total pays income tax, higher prices and still has $900 per year over.

More than 5,000,000 Canadians are now wage-earners, 750,000 more than in August, 1940. A great many of these are new earners out of schools and from the ranks of the unemployed.

McEwan to Army

George McEwan, assistant manager of the Geneva, Orilla, has joined the army. B. W. Hyslop will join Manager Les Vicary in his place.

HAVE US REBUILD
YOUR PROJECTORS
NOW
WHILE REPAIR PARTS
ARE STILL AVAILABLE

PERKINS ELECTRIC
COMPANY LIMITED
277 VICTORIA STREET TORONTO
2027 BLEURY STREET MONTREAL

IT'S ALWAYS FAIR WEATHER WHEN GOOD SHOWMEN AND GOOD SHOWS GET TOGETHER!

THE Paramount Picture

EXTRA
PLAYING TIME IS THE ORDER OF THE DAY WITH PARAMOUNT PRODUCT!

VOL. 1 — The Lowdown on the Production and Distribution of the Best Shows in Town! — NO. 5

'Avengers' Will Win Wide Support

Thrilling Film of Underground Norway Will Interest Everyone

In Nazi-occupied Europe that famous "V" signal is much more than a mystic symbol invented for use on milady's costume jewelry!

That's only one of the things we can learn from Paramount's dramatic new film, "The Avengers." The picture, starring Deborah Kerr, Hugh Williams, Ralph Richardson and Griffith Jones, is a powerful romance, told against a backdrop of war—the Battle of the Atlantic, the courage of the Commandos and the unceasing struggle of the Norwegian "underground." It was produced in England by Paul Soskin with the full co-operation of the British War Office and the Norwegian Government-in-Exile.

In the picture Hugh Williams, as a British agent dropped by parachute near a Nazi U-boat base in a remote Norwegian fjord, is trapped in a hall by the Gestapo. A Norwegian girl (Deborah Kerr) taps out the "V" signal—three dots and a dash—on a table and the hall promptly turns into bedlam, every Norwegian in the place banging it out with their feet, with beer mugs, with whistles, with their fists. Even the orchestra takes it up. In the confusion the lights are doused and the British agent escapes.

But that sequence is only one of the highlight thrills of a thrill-filled film. There's another when a member of the "underground" and the British agent use flashlights to signal the location of the U-boat base to a squadron of RAF bombers—and see the sea serpents nest blown to smithereens. There's another when Commandos in a sudden raid rescue a group of Norwegian patriots from a Nazi firing squad. There's another when — but that's enough. The picture is one succession of tense scenes and thrilling moments, every one of them telling the same story: that love lives on despite Nazis and firing squads, that men and women who have once tasted freedom can never be really conquered.

In Nazi-occupied Europe — in Norway and a dozen other sullen, seething, desperate lands — the "V" signal stands for "Victory" . . . and for vengeance.

WHEE SPREE at a boy's military academy keeps Ginger Rogers on her toes when she coasts in disguised as a 12-year-old in her new comedy hit, "The Major and The Minor," opposite Ray Milland.

Register Rings When Crosby Sings

With the addition of Dona Drake and Anthony Quinn to the cast, "Road to Morocco" boasts of one of the best rosters of any of the "Road" pictures. And the way the hilarious trio of Crosby-Lamour-Hope sing out with the hit tunes from the picture make you sit forward in your seat. The tunes are "The Road to Morocco," "Ain't Got a Dime to My Name," "Constantly," "Moonlight Becomes You" and "Ho-ho-ho-hum."

Outdoor backgrounds to match any of the famous epics—lavish musical numbers to match any of the Paramount procession of smash musical-comedies. And you have never seen sets the like of those you'll see along "The Road to Morocco."

Everybody Goes For 'The Major'

Academy Award Winner Ginger Rogers puts new ginger into her acting in the part she portrays of a minor in the "Major and the Minor." Playing opposite Ray Milland, Ginger turns in another performance that has elicited raves.

All across Canada the picture has been piling up marvellous business and in most spots where it has played to date "The Major and the Minor" is enjoying holdovers. Pick Vancouver or Montreal, the story is always the same—second week.

'Morocco' on Road to Success

With the marvellous pre-selling campaign that Paramount have given their latest "Road" picture, "The Road to Morocco," it looks like one of the outstanding hits of the year. What with coast-to-coast broadcasts featuring Bob Hope and Bing Crosby and the warm warbling of Dorothy Lamour right across the dial, radio listeners from the Atlantic to the Pacific are waiting for the picture to come to their local theatre.

The hundreds of thousands of magazine readers are also avidly reading the latest dope on the incandescent trio, Hope-Lamour-Crosby. Juke boxes across the country are dishing out to hep cats the latest smash hits from "The Road to Morocco."

PAULETTE GETS THE RANGE on the dangerous red-head who's out to steal her ranger in the Technicolored romance, "The Forest Rangers." Fred MacMurray has some tall explaining to do to fiery Paulette Goddard who's plenty burned up when she discovers Susan Hayward has a prior claim on him.

OWI Chief Pans Dual Bills

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that such a move would have a moral, spiritual and material benefit.

"The habit of sitting three or four or even more hours with one's mind afloat in a fictional world," Mr. Mellett said, "hardly equips the American population for the serious job of dealing with real life."

The showing of two full-length pictures at one sitting, the speaker said, had resulted from competition among theatre owners, and had grown to the extent that "double features are now the rule in most American communities."

"It has become actually a great burden on the theatre business," he continued, "a burden which many theatre owners would be glad to unload. Continually we get demands from theatre owners that the government do something to put an end to double-features. Many of them say that what they now regard as a nuisance to themselves never will be ended without government action."

Mr. Mellett declared there was reason to doubt this because there are some large areas in which the double-feature does not flourish, because of "the stubborn resistance of resourceful theatre operators to the encroachments of the plague on their territory."

"Naturally we would like the double feature eliminated if only for the duration of the war," said Mr. Mellett. "There is only so much screen time in a day, only so much time for the presentation of the best and most helpful entertainment and for the presentation of vital information. We frankly want the small part of the total time that is required to deliver this information. Double features make it difficult to provide this time."

Hollywood to Make Canuck Training Film

Because of the unavailability of experienced film actors in Canada, the government is arranging for the production of an army training picture in Hollywood. William Burnside, assistant of John Grierson, Government Film Commissioner, has been there making arrangements. This will be the first Canadian training film produced these with the exception of a cartoon made by Walt Disney several months ago on tanks.

Several weeks will be required to get the various Canadian and American bureaus to put their check on the plan, as the two governments cooperate to avoid duplication on such films.

Who Is Esmerelda?

What haunts the idle hours of every single man? The vision of a lovely woman. When such a vision comes suddenly out of nowhere and presents itself before him during his busy hours, he's just about a gone goose—if he knows where he can find the woman.

What's happening to me shouldn't happen to a dog. It's much too good for him.

For almost two years now the face of a beautiful girl has interposed itself regularly into the scene before my eyes, no matter the hour or the season or the scene. She allows only a fleeting glimpse of herself. She has suddenly showed up in Africa, the Arctic, on a battlefield, in a bedroom and on any background you can think of. When she appears the rest of the people fade into nothingness until she vanishes.

I call my mystery girl Esmerelda. Not that that is her name but I must call her something.

Esmerelda is the sweetheart of the screening room. She's somewhere in every MGM film but she isn't always seen. The man who keeps her hidden from the public view is the projectionist—and Esmerelda shows up just when he doesn't want her to.

This is the secret of Esmerelda: Every film print has some extra footage attached to each reel, allowing for the changeover time on the next machine. With most companies the reel number is revealed on the screen when the projectionist doesn't start it at the exact time necessary to avoid an obvious break in the continuity. With MGM it's my Esmerelda.

The bookers who check the new films are bored with Esmerelda. Not me. I've grown to love her. When you slump into a screening room chair at 9.30 a.m. after a hard night, the sight of Esmerelda is positively titillating. I'm going to start a campaign to make the studio give her screen credit. Sometimes she's the best thing in the picture. She ought to get an Academy Award for endurance.

MGM has used Esmerelda to test film for nigh on 20 years, the bookers tell me. And she hasn't changed a bit.

But who is Esmerelda? No one seems to know.

* * *

Another Mystery Solved

Win Barron, Paramount's Canadian press agent, had hit the road and for almost two weeks Gordon Lightstone, the company's Dominion chief, had been trying to get in touch with him. Win was always one step ahead of communication.

Then Mr. Lightstone sat down to look at the newest Paramount newsreel. One clip showed the Vancouver premiere of "Forest Rangers," with Susan Hayward being greeted by the folks. There, sharing the spotlight with the star, was the wandering Mr. Barron!

P.S. He's gone again.

* * *

Some Dope, Me!

Quite a number of film men were present at the recent prenuptial to-do held at the Royal York Hotel for Harry Hersenhoren, brother of fiddling Sam. Your scribe was the toastmaster and Sam Sterberg made a speech. Sammy Sales and Johnny Shapiro, along with Lou Krugel and Lou Skuce, provided the entertainment. Skuce had just returned from a date at the Roxy, New York.

Sales and Shapiro got up a quiz as part of the show. They placed this scribe on the board of experts. They asked a number of questions about the meaning of such abbreviations as C.O.D., A.W.O.L. and so on, all of which were answered. Then they turned to me.

"What does C.W.F. mean?" Sales asked.

For not being able to answer I got plenty of abuse. Finally Sales threw the answer.

"It means Canadian Film Weekly, you dope!" he answered.

Warner Bros. Plan Newsreel

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disapproved of it on the grounds that "every branch of the industry, instead of developing new use for raw film stock, should consider the importance of elimination of waste." Its statement said that pressure placed on exhibitors to use weekly newsreels has been "one of the basic problems confronting exhibitor - distributor relationship."

In response, a Warner spokesman said the exhibitor attack was inspired by the present newsreel producers, "who fear competition." "Public feeling and the feeling in high government circles," the Warner answer continued, "is that the present newsreels stink. They are all exactly the same, so why not put out just one and save film that way. Exhibitors should welcome a new newsreel, but they don't have to buy it if they don't want to. As for conservation of film, we know more about what is necessary than the exhibitors do."

Plans for the venture involve the enlistment of amateur cinematographers as space-rate correspondents, departmentalized features as well as news coverage, with Bette Davis serving as the editor of a woman's section, and a 16-millimeter edition of each reel for the armed forces abroad. Technicolor, a newsreel innovation, will be used on some.

RCAF Takes Cohn's 'Movie Quiz'

Johnny Cohn's "Movie Quiz," which will open in quite a few theatres after the new year, has been booked into the RCAF theatre at Camp Borden. One hundred and fifty dollars in prizes, made up of Victory Bonds and War Savings Stamps, will be offered at its first showing. Officers became enthusiastic after seeing a screening of it. The men will be charged 25 cents for the score cards.

No charge for the cards will be made at regular theatres, says Johnny. The Hays office has endorsed "Movie Quiz."

Sydney Fox Passes

A star until a few years ago, Sydney Fox died in New York last week at the age of 31. She had been ill for a year.

William Fox Jailed

William Fox, once a great name in picture production, started a jail term of one year last week. He was sentenced in October, 1941, for conspiracy to obstruct justice.

Sunday Movies For Soldiers?

"We are very anxious indeed to see all obstacles removed that stand in the way of moving picture shows being made available to troops on Sunday afternoons," stated J. R. Johnston, executive secretary, Citizens Committee for Troops in Training, in a statement issued in Toronto last week.

"We are, and have been, catering to the entertainment needs of some 50,000 men in training centres in Military District No. 2 and Air Force Training Command No. 1, for the past three years, and in that time have had ample opportunity to observe the lack of suitable entertainment for troops both in training centres in Toronto, and from camps within 100 miles, here on leave on Sundays.

"We have no wish whatever to compete with the churches' Sunday morning and evening services but we do feel that moving picture entertainment could suitably fill the bill Sunday afternoons without interfering with the spirit of the Lord's Day Observance Act," continued Mr. Johnston.

"We are at present presenting a series of Sunday afternoon concerts at the Art Gallery, but this only takes care of several hundred troops' entertainment needs, while actually there are several thousand troops in Toronto every Sunday who are away from their homes and their friends, and who, after strenuous training periods, really need, for purposes of change and relaxation, a good moving picture show.

"The National executive of the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire whose membership, of course, includes thousands upon thousands of church members from coast to coast recently passed a resolution urging the dominion government to remove all obstacles to the men and women in uniform being allowed to see Sunday movies.

"With winter here and outdoor sports and entertainment nil, the need for Sunday movies in downtown theatres is imperative," he concluded.

Letters for and against have been appearing in the daily press.

Ingrid Bergman in 'Five Graves to Cairo'

Ingrid Bergman, about to be shown in Warners "Casablanca" and Paramount's "For Whom the Bell Tolls," has been given the lead in Para's "Five Graves to Cairo." Franchot Tone will share star billing. Bergman is destined to be one of the greatest of stars after "Bells' and "Casablanca' hit the screens.

Digest of Reviews

New Reviews

CASABLANCA (Vitagraph)

A truly terrific drama with title and story tied in with the times. It deals with the fight of the anti-Nazis and is played perfectly by some of the screen's most appealing draws. Humphrey Bogart is the anti-Fascist gone sour after the Spanish debacle who gains a new realization through his love for Ingrid Bergman and returns to the fight. Paul Henreid is the anti-Fascist underground leader and Claude Rains a corrupt police chief. For the most part the story makes sound common sense. The production is superb and is in keeping with excellent and exciting dramatic developments.

PALM BEACH STORY (Paramount)

A very funny flight of Preston Sturges' fancy. To get fancy, you could call it a satirical farce but it's what we understand to be screwball comedy—and a very good brand. Claudette Colbert is the wife deserting husband Joel McCrea so she can hustle some smitten sucker into backing his airport design. Joel doesn't want it that way and what happens as a result makes the whole show. Rudy Vallee, as a stuffed shirt—stuffed with greenbacks and a heart of gold—turns in a fine performance and Sig Arno, as a nutty gigolo, is immense. Mary Astor, playing a man-grabber, does well. All around it's a very funny picture, made so by Sturges' fine talents and his eye for unusual characters.

MY HEART BELONGS TO DADDY (Paramount)

This film straggles after its catchy title, never quite gaining. It's the implausible story of a burlecutie who hides in the house of a beard-wearing professor and spontaneous combustion causes love. There's a baby involved, child of the girl's late hubby, which causes disputes and developments. Richard Carlson is the beavered prof and Martha O'Driscoll the girl. There's a nice character job done by Cecil Kellaway.

ICELAND (20th Century-Fox)

The skating sequences here are as fine as anything Sonja Henie has done up to now. Otherwise it's just an ordinary musical about Yankee soldiers in a beglamored and untrue-to-life Iceland. There are a number of swell new songs, played by Sammy Kaye's band. John Payne handles the romance as a wise guy wooing Henie who falls for his own line. Jack Oakie rolls through the comedy slot. Sterling Holloway is the native dope straight-armed out of his sweetheart by Payne.

GIRL TROUBLE (20th Century-Fox)

The names and performances make a film out of a very thin story. Don Ameche is a South American playboy in the USA to float a loan for his rubber plantation. He rents the fancy apartment of the newly-impoverished Joan Bennett, picking up the idea that she's the maid. She helps him get the loan. It's quite amusing and is made that way by Billie Burke, Frank Craven and Alan Dinehart.

THE CAT PEOPLE (RKO)

A well-done and chilling horror story based on an old legend that jealous women, under certain circumtances, would be changed to cats and spread evil. The fear that she has inherited this curse makes Simone Simon a psychological problem. Jealousy provokes a grisly tragedy. Kent Smith is the suffering husband of the cat woman and Tom Conway plays the psychologist.

THE BOOGIE MAN WILL GET YOU (Columbia)

A screwy kibitz on horror films which is very funny. Boris Karloff leads the goings-on in an old inn peopled with nuts. Peter Lorre and Maxie Rosenbloom are in the game. Karloff is the professor trying to create another Frankenstein who knocks over anybody arriving at his door. This is right in the groove with the new trend for comedy-horror combination.

FOREIGN AGENT (Monogram)

Monogram was smart enough to move the Nazis right into the heart of Hollywood to get some new twists into the old routines. In this good melodrama, which also has two musical numbers, the spies are trying to get hold of a searchlight filter invented by a movie technician. John Shelton and Gale Storm are the leads. The best piece of work is done by old-timer Ivan Lebedeff as a Jap. A nice job all around.

Producers Releasing Corporation Limited
P.R.C.
H. J. ALLEN, President

A Picture For Every Week

JUNGLE SIREN
The No. 1 Gorgeous Girl. Bewitching! Exciting!
Ann Coreo, Buster Crabbe

★

A YANK IN LIBYA
A daredevil American and a beautiful English girl match their wits against an Arab uprising!
Walter Woolf King, Joan Woodbury, Parkyakarkus, Duncan Renaldo

★

BROADWAY BIG SHOT
A headline hunter goes to jail for a story.
Ralph Byrd, Virginia Hale, William Halligan

★

PRISONER OF JAPAN
A boy and a girl give their lives to stop Japan.
Alan Baxter, Gertrude Michael

★

GALLANT LADY
The story of a mercy killer who escapes.
Rose Hobart, Sydney Blackmer, Jane Novack

★

SWAMP WOMAN
Savage! Exciting! Exotic!
Ann Coreo, Jack Larue

★

BOMBS OVER BURMA
Anna May Wong, Noel Madison, Leslie Madison

★

MEN OF SAN QUENTIN
Filmed inside the prison walls!
J. Anthony Hughes, George Breakston, Eleanor Stewart

★

THE MAD MONSTER
Half-man, half-beast—and a killer!
Johnny Downs, George Zucco, Anne Nagel

★

THE PANTHER'S CLAW
A fine spine-chiller!
Sydney Blackmer, Ricki Vallin, Bryan Foulger

★

DUKE OF THE NAVY
For fun only!
Ralph Byrd, Veda Arnborg

★

Producers Releasing Corporation
LIMITED
Executive Offices:
277 Victoria St., Toronto, 2, Ont.

Mag Says Movies Deserve Break

Pic, popular illustrated magazine, makes some interesting points about the place of the motion picture industry in its issue of November 24th. An editorial states that movies should get special consideration from the government.

Here is part of the editorial:

"Hollywood continues to come through, in spite of normal wartime material shortages; resourcefulness handles them, so far. Man power is a different, increasingly important worry. The names of those men stars who are going to be missing from the screen have been pretty well publicized; they include screen favorites and technicians — directors, cameramen, sound men, writers, etc.

"Just as we are finding out that the drafting of farm manpower has created a grave problem, manpower is the movie-maker's problem—and both food and entertainment have always rated as prime war-time 'musts'.

"Maybe that problem rates par with other war-time industry — it doesn't involve large numbers — mainly hard-to-replace training and experience.

"We've got to have entertainment—not just pictures—to keep on with that 'morale' job, and to continue the no mean millions of revenue flowing to the Treasury from the amusement taxes and industry profits. . . .

"All of which is by way of saying the movie industry is important these days—deserving of special consideration—more than the official kind words they are receiving. Maybe some of its young men will have to be told that they also serve who bring good cheer, and the time may come when overalls or make-up might be just as distinguished a badge of service as is the uniform."

Companies Kick Back Some Unfrozen Coin

It is likely that $250,000 of the coin recently thawed out by the British Exchequer and returned to the studios will be presented to the British War Relief. Will Hays and Banker Winthrop Aldrich are fixing it up. The latter heads British War Relief in the USA.

Levey's New Offices

Jules Levey, ex-Torontonian, president of Mayfair Pictures, Inc., has opened new offices in the RKO Building, New York City. He has appointed Archie Mayers as his assistant.

Contributions to this column will be greatly appreciated from any member of the motion picture industry, from coast to coast, whether he has chain affiliations or is strictly independent.

Address all letters to "What Did You Do?" c/o Film Weekly, 21 Dundas Sq., Toronto, Ont.

ERNEST HATFIELD, Capitol Theatre, Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, broke up his ads on "Reap the Wild Wind" into a number of inch boxes throughout the local paper. Each had a head photo and some catchy copy. These ran for several days in advance, appearing on every page. A good-sized reader helped provide more information. This attention-getting idea worked out very well.

* * *

MANAGER STEWART GILLESPIE, Assistant Manager Ernie Reid and Eldon Climer of the staff of the Elgin, Ottawa, worked out a strong campaign for "The Moon and Sixpence." They arranged a display of paintings by young Ottawa artists in the lobby and invited the patrons to vote for their favorites, awarding prizes to them. A slide called attention to the display.

The picture, about the life of an artist, lent itself to certain types of exploitation and the boys took good advantage. They made tieups and window displays, working with local bookstores and the Public Library. They even hooked up with the National Art Gallery. These things were done beside the usual heralds, etc.

* * *

HAROLD KING of the Cinema, Toronto, is now into his second series of successful auctions for the British War Victims' Fund. Various merchants donate the articles, which Harold auctions from the stage. Much newspaper space has resulted from the idea and interest in his neighborhood is spreading rapidly.

* * *

ROB BROWN, Vanity, Windsor, has been quite busy talking for "Talk of the Town." He found a lady who was able and willing to whisper and she started the biggest whispering campaign on record. She went through all the large department stores, asking what T.O.T.T. meant. The word spread around like a whirlwind and finally hit all switchboard girls, who gave their full co-operation in spreading the good word. Music and newsstand tieups were the order of the day and there were a lot of laughs.

LEN HERBERT, Centre, London, works a pleasing idea. When a patron who is wearing glasses enters the theatre during the winter his glasses steam up and he can't see. The doorman offers him a sheet of Kleenex with the compliments of the theatres. A tieup with an optical firm usually yields the little pink wiper but because of the shortage Kleenex must be relied on now. A container attached to the ticket box holds the Kleenex.

* * *

TYPICAL of the letters of thanks being received by managers for their help during the Victory Loan are those received by Bill Payne, Granada, St. Thomas, and Harland Rankin, Centre, Chatham.

Bill's letter, from H. S. Easton, assistant organizer in Elgin County, reads:

"On behalf of the National War Finance Committee, I would like to extend to you our very warm thanks and appreciation of your share in the Third Victory Loan Canvass, not only in the City of St. Thomas but in the County of Elgin. Our appreciation also goes to two of your very fine employees, Mr. Robertson and Mr. Mills, who through you kindly consented to go with me nightly to operate the moving picture projection unit throughout the County. In my humble opinion the Moving Picture Industry is very essential to the war effort and there is no doubt that the fine films being shown throughout the country in the various theatres are an immense help in moulding people's opinion favorable to the war effort."

* * *

HARLAND'S letter, from J. S. Brown, assistant organizer for Kent County, read in part: "I should like to express our gratitude for the fine cooperation received during the Loan from your theatre, staff and yourself. Your contribution to the success of the loan has been an important one."

Esquire Offers Some Good Ones

Esquire's list of English and Russian productions is growing with the addition of new and fine features.

On the current list is a picture which has won great praise in England and the United States, "One of Ourcraft is Missing." It is the story of British flyers baling out over Holland after their plane has been damaged while raiding Stuttgart and follows the same pattern that made "49th Parallel" an outstanding success.

Its American showing, pre- and public, caused much comment from trade and newspaper reviewers. It's revelations of the Dutch Underground are heartening. With its aid they defeat Nazi attempts to capture them and return to the skies, this time bound for Berlin.

In England and the United States "One of Our Aircraft is Missing" drew lineups and there is no doubt that it will get the same welcome in Canada.

The powerful pull of Russian pictures has led to the importation of the cream of the Soviet crop. "This is the Enemy" and "Moscow Strikes Back" won strong patronage and much editorial space. Both pictures were endorsed officially by Victory Loan committees throughout the country and are still keeping wickets busy in the smaller runs. Now Esquire offers another thrilling Soviet film, "In the Rear of the Enemy," one of the most powerful films to come out of Russia. It is the story of the war on skis and is made clear by simple English dialogue.

Very few English shorts are distributed in Canada and when one is brought over, it must have special appeal. That's exactly the case with "Yellow Caeser," a 20-minute funny sketch of the world's arch-failure, Mussolini. The scene is Libya.

Free French Leader Praises 'Commando'

Al Perley, manager of the Midtown Theatre, Toronto, received a congratulatory tlegram on playing Esquire's "The First Commando" from Lieut.-Col. Pierrene, delegate of the Fighting French National Committee in Canada. It read:

"My personal congratulations for playing The First Commando at a time so well chosen. This entertaining and exciting picture is of the greatest interest to all those who try to imagine how Europe can be liberated from Nazi domination."

'Fortress' in Fancy M't'l Bow

With the crack RCAF band, just returned from overseas to No. 5 Manning Depot, providing martial tunes, and with officer personnel representing the RAF Ferry Command and local RCAF units, Montreal City officials and others as honored guests, the Canadian Continental Premiere engagement of the new British-made Warner Bros. motion picture, "Flying Fortress", literally got off to a flying start at the Capitol theatre in Montreal, Nov. 20. A CFCF broadcast direct from the theatre highlighted the affair.

Through the courtesy of Squadron-Leader C. J. McNicoll and Flight Lieutenant W. G. Kennedy, the 50-piece flyers band, under the direction of Sergeant C. Friberg, arrived in front of the Capitol shortly past eight o'clock and rendered a stirring concert at that point, before entering the theatre. Planes overhead played searchlights on the band and the blacked-out marquee.

The CFCF program went on the air at 8.15, with Jack Ralph, Montreal radio commentator, handling the microphone to depict a graphic account of the arrival of the premiere audience and introduce various dignitaries. Listeners were offered copies of the emergency handbook for women, "Should Air Raids Come!", published by Canadian Silk Products Ltd. in the interests of national security and related in subject matter to ARP scenes in the movie. Previously elected "Miss Flying Fortress" at the Club Esquire, where she is the singing star, Tanya Tamara, gave her impressions of the film in French and English as well as her native Russian.

Special guests included Dr. Peter Lehmann and Miss Elsa Lehmann, brother and sister of Canadian-born Carla Lehmann, who is starred with Richard Greene in "Flying Fortress".

The film was produced at Warner Bros. Teddington Studios in England.

Selnick's Fox Deal

David O. Selznick has joined 20th Century-Fox for the duration. He turned over some stories and transferred a few players to the studio.

Film to Show Rommel's Retreat

The beating given the Afrika Corps and Rommel by Allied troops will be the background of "Sahara,' a Columbia picture. It will have an all-male cast headed by Melvyn Douglas.

By TAP KEYES

So many tears did the Bette Davis picture, "Now, Voyager," evoke that the Hollywood Theatre, New York, had to install three large new mirrors and an extra attendant so that the ladies can regain their faces. . . . An English picture drawing more raves of praise than have been heard in a long time is "In Which We Serve." Noel Coward not only acted in it, he wrote, produced and directed it, as well as composing the musical score. Coward next will see him with Canada's Beatrice Lillie, who returned to England after her son, Lord Peel, was killed in action and refuses to leave her work there until victory comes. . . . MGM has signed a Vancouver girl, Mary McLeod, whose first appearance will be in the forthcoming Spencer Tracy-Katherine Hepburn film, "Keeper of the Flame."

* * *

"The Thin Man" has changed wives. Because Myrna Loy refuses to come back to the screen since her recent marriage, Irene Dunne will play opposite William Powell. . . . Though Washington has now limited all salaries to $25,000 per year and many stars, having earned that much, are faced with working for nothing, they are sticking right at it just the same—a fine gesture. . . . The son of Hanley Stafford, a Canadian who is Baby Snooks daddy on the radio, is home on leave from the RAF. . . . "Commandos Strike at Dawn" will get a special showing on board the Prince David of the Canadian Navy. The ship and personnel were used in the making of the picture. . . . Clark Gable has lost 15 pounds since he joined the army—and looks better.

* * *

Hollywood is constantly being surprised at the number of talented people who turn out to be Canadians. Spencer Tracy got his surprise in Toronto when there for the Victory Loan. The biggest worry of the stars due for radio broadcasts here is the quality of the script they are asked to play. An actor, you know, is no better than his script. Tracy was offered a script by Don Henshaw, who used to write "Forgotten Footsteps" and other shows, and was tickled with it. He told everyone too. The story was about Libya.

* * *

Perhaps the finest reception received by any star in Canada on a personal visit was the one Walter Pidgeon got. Walter is a New Brunswick boy and his visit was sort of a homecoming. A few facts about him may interest you. Walter Pidgeon was a lieutenant in the Canadian Field Artillery, 65th Battery, during the last war and was badly crushed when caught between two gun carriages. One of his brothers is an officer in a Canadian regiment and another manages his affairs. He became an actor when Fred Astaire heard him sing at a Boston party but refuses to sing now. He's six foot-four and weighs 200 pounds, owns 300 corn cob pipes, likes loud pajamas and though he's a Canadian, has never played one on the screen. His newest picture is "White Cargo," in which he appears opposite Hedy Lamarr.

* * *

You'll have your first look at a new star when you see Gene Kelly play a ham-heel-hero role opposite Judy Garland in "For Me and My Gal." He dances, sings and acts well. . . . Judy Garland has been on the stage ever since she can remember, at one time appearing as Baby Frances Gumm, a child singer. Her father was a theatre owner and she later toured as one of the Gumm Sisters, a singing trio. She reached the top early and stayed there. . . . Alice Faye is coming back to pictures after an absence of 18 months in "Hello, Frisco, Hello" . . . Ann Harding, star of other years, is making a strong comeback. She'll be seen in "Eyes in the Night," with Edward Arnold, and "Mission to Moscow," with Walter Huston.

Greet Your Friends in the
CHRISTMAS ISSUE
Canadian Film Weekly
TWO DOLLARS FOR ONE INCH

Fox Uses New Night Filter

The elimination of night filming out-of-doors due to dim-out regulations is causing no production headaches at Twentieth Century-Fox, according to Dan Clark, executive director of photography.

"During the past month," says Clark, "we have filmed night exteriors for "The Immortal Sergeant," "Crash Dive," "Mr. ... For Error," "Fighting Chetniks," and "Secret Mission." All have been filmed in daylight and have proved as satisfactory, and in many cases more satisfactory than if they had been filmed at night."

In filmed night sequences Twentieth Century-Fox uses a filter perfected by Clark. When Clark was himself a cameraman he specialized in shooting night sequences by day and over a period of years he has perfected a filter, the formula for which he is keeping to himself.

Cameramen agree that night sequences filmed in the daytime are much more effective in bringing out detail but that in many instances they do not appear convincing. Clark contends that they are every bit as convincing and he has thousands of feet of film to prove it.

"The Moon Is Down" will have Clark's new filter working overtime since about twenty per cent of the picture will be night exteriors. Arthur C. Miller has been assigned to photograph "The Moon Is Down."

PRC to Build Own Star Roster

Pathe has given its wholly owned Producers Releasing Corp. the green light to go ahead on the building up of a contract list of players and directors and has approved the financing of higher budgeted pictures, it was revealed by Leon Fromkess, v.p. in charge of production, at the two-day national parley of the company at the Blackstone hotel, Chicago.

According to Fromkess all PRC exchanges have on hand now prints of all releases up to May 1, affording the exhibitor a chance to screen their product months ahead of release. Production of new product will begin in February, Fromkess said, and the policy will be to continue their past participation of tomorrow's headlines for stories.

The company has added two features to its originally announced program of 24 for the current season.

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ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO

Room 105 Crown Bldg., .
26 Queen St. East,
Toronto

Syd B. Taube,
Secretary,
Telephone Elgin 9630